

Chuo University 2011-2012

Evaluation rapport

As an exchange student, I attended Chuo University from the period April 2011-march 2012. I major in Mathematics-economics from Copenhagen University and I came as a graduate student, where I enrolled in Chuo University Graduate School of Economics and Commerce. Although the beginning of my adventure was full with difficulties, I must say that the whole period of stay has been nothing but marvelous and surprisingly positive in all aspects. I will elaborate further on how I perceived my one-year student life in Japan.

APPLYING

When applying be sure to have enough time to read the necessary information on Chuo University and Copenhagen University homepage, because my main concern was finding out the requirements for successful admission (such as):

- Is it required to have any Japanese language skills (JLPT level)
- Is it necessary to have a certain amount of cash on your bank account to be accepted
- Housing situation
- Course description in English and credits for graduate school student

Most reports I read all focused a lot on the bachelor courses and there were little focus on the graduate schools. To be honest, I was a bit anxious about the graduate courses, because a lot of reports said that Chuo University graduate wasn't very well developed for students with lack of Japanese skills.

It was very difficult to find such inform in English on the graduate school homepage, But thanks to the new UPDATED Chuo University homepage in English, all these questions are presented in a clear cut way and very easy to access.

So I greatly advice any one to check the new improved homepage before applying (<http://global.chuo-u.ac.jp/english/>)

Language Skills

I must underline that I had NO knowledge at all of Japanese prior to my study. The closest I had of Japanese experience was watching Naruto and bleach (slang expressions like dattebayo) on television. In order to be accepted at the graduate school of economics, one needn't have any JLPT level.

Chuo offers Japanese language studies for all international students free of charge even if you don't major in linguistics. It ranges from beginners to advanced and its highly recommended if you want to enjoy your stay in Japan.

I will also recommend joining an international club for students (such as sputnik) and if you are into martial arts, you can also join clubs such as kendo, judo, karate and for those seeking love, I recommend the tennis club. I recommend joining a club because you get to meet Japanese students who actually speak English very well and very helpful for coping with loneliness and improving your Japanese skills.

COMING TO TOKYO AFTER THE ATOMIC DISASTER

Prior to my entry, Japan experienced a triple tragedy (atomic reactor, earthquake and flooding) in the northern Area of Japan. Most foreign countries told most of their citizens to get out of Tokyo and thus, I too was influenced by the impact of the disaster. Nonetheless I figured that if the Chuo University staffs and teachers are still teaching and brave enough to stay in the faculty in such a situation, then I will most definitely be coming as scheduled. The decision to come as planned has changed my life for the better. I got to appear on TV Tokyo with a free trip to Kyoto, which wouldn't have been possible if I had postponed my trip.

So it turned out that coming despite difficulties turned out to be a blessing in disguise.

LIVING IN TOKYO

Living in Tokyo is quite an experience and sometimes a bit hard when you don't speak the language. But its amazing how much you can connect with Japanese

people by just learning how to say your name in Japanese. Most people are quite helpful; especially the Chuo University staff was very helpful in many ways. Due to my lack of Japanese, they helped me apply for Alien Registration Card, Getting a Cellphone and even to the point where they talk to Japanese post office when you are expecting a package from Denmark. The staffs were all very professional and make my living in Tokyo so much easier.

Contrary to what I have heard about people living in a cardboard box in Japan, The Chou housing is the same as one might expect in Copenhagen in a one room apartment with fridge, kitchen, bed, desk and closet all provided for 40000yen(2800 DKK) per month. Daily products and foods are approximately the same as Denmark.

STUDYING

The courses were well organized and with many courses to choose from (I had about 20 course selections in English to choose from).

Attending lectures was easy and pleasant. The teachers were all very professional and serious about their field of study. I was very eager to know the current state of the Japanese economy, which has long been plagued by decreasing population and deflation. In understanding the issue concerning the Japanese economy, we utilized theories such as overlapping generation model, New Keynesian monetary stabilization policy models in order to capture the macroeconomic aspect of the economy. Topics on the service industry and programming classes in artificial economics has hone my skills and will pursue to learn more on the Japanese economy in the near future. So there are definitely wide ranges of topics to study at the graduate school of Chuo University.

CONCLUDING

In concluding, I will like to thank the Chuo University organization for teaching me Japanese language, culture and making my stay in japan a pleasant experience. They were very understandable and helpful in all situations. Whether it is a trip to the dentist, travelling around japan or coping with loneliness in Tokyo. I learned a lot from my stay at Chuo University and regret leaving the school already after a year. But all good things makes come to an end.

I will recommend Chuo University to my other fellow exchange students because Class courses are well explained and all the Chuo staffs are very professional and friendly in dealing with exchange students.

I will definitely recommend travelling to Okinawa with Chuo University for the peace seminar and if you are still in doubt about going to Chuo University:

You have a chance to be on national TV (TV Tokyo) with everything paid for